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OXFORD, AND ENGLISH EDUCATION.

(Continued from page 335.)

"WE ought to judge in matters of education rather "from experience, than from reasoning. We should in- "quire what nation has produced the most active, and the "greatest men; not indeed the greatest number of compil- "ers and book-makers, but of the most intrepid, the most "acute, accomplished, and magnanimous characters. This "is very probably the English nation."* We must all acquiesce in this tribute to the preeminence of the English nation; and it will be well to remember to what kind of education her superiority is to be imputed. That discipline or instruction is certainly the best, which makes the wisest and the greatest men. The study of ancient literature forms an important part of English education. Its beneficial effect in enlarging and liberalizing the mind has been often demonstrated; and I can add little in praise of those studies which the learned have never ceased to cultivate and admire. "Adeò felicissimus ille" (in the words of one of the the literary ornaments of England) "et multo doctissimus, "quisquis ea quæ antiqui illi et senserunt et fecerunt op- "time percepit." In order however perfectly to understand

* Vindication of Oxford, &c.

those writings, which are contained in two learned and copious languages, a long and patient study of grammar is indispensable. Besides its utility in fixing the attention and strengthening the memory of youth, this study has advantages yet more extensive, and embraces objects worthy the deepest inquiries of the more advanced scholar. The remarks of Quinctilian on this subject are certainly deserving of attention. "Ne quis igitur," says the illustrious rhetorician, "tamquam parva fastidiat grammatices elementa: non quia "magnæ sit operæ consonantes a vocalibus discernere, ip-"sasque eas in semivocalium numerum mutarumque partiri: "Sed quia interiora velut sacri hujus adeuntibus, apparebit "multa rerum subtilitas, quæ non modo acuere ingenia pu-"erilia, sed exercere altissimam quoque eruditionem ac sci-"entiam possit."* This encomium will be considered by no means extravagant when we consider the acuteness and erudition, which have been displayed in this extensive department of literature. "Grammar," says Campbell, "in its "general principles has a close connexion with the under-"standing, and the theory of the association of ideas."† But notwithstanding grammatical learning is supported by the highest authorities, and is absolutely necessary to the acquisition of philosophical truth, it has fallen into disrepute with many, who would be ashamed to be called ignorant and illiberal; and even some "who have neither the accent of "Christian, pagan, or man, nor can speak so many words "together with as much propriety as Balaam's ass did, do "yet imagine words to be infinitely beneath the concern of "their exalted understanding."

The thousand petty objections to the study of grammar are also extended to the acquisition of languages. It is not my intention to obviate these objections. They hardly deserve notice, for the truly learned never urge them, and to

* Lib. I. Cap. 4. † Introd. to Phil. on Rhet.

those who do, I will just say with him quoted in the Diversions of Purley " Qui vero alios etiam a literarum linguarum studio absterrent, non antiquæ sapientiæ sed novæ stultitiæ Doctores sunt habendi." The large portion of time, which in the course of English education is devoted to the construction and principles of the learned languages ought to be considered as well employed, even if no other object were to be attained than an accurate and extensive knowledge of the masters of antiquity; but when it is also remembered that an intimate acquaintance with those languages is indispensable to any progress in the study of universal grammar or of the philosophy of language, a study, which of all others a liberal inquirer should not neglect to pursue, we cannot too much commend that system of education in which those studies receive so much care, and that institution, in which they are especially encouraged and promoted. Nor should it operate as a serious objection to grammatical learning, that many have been employed in laborious, but trifling inquiries relating to it;—this is no more than has happened to other pursuits.—Theology is not the only science that has had its visionaries, nor is grammar the only one which has yielded unimportant subjects of contention to noisy and conceited disputants. Let us forget the little prejudices which we are too apt to entertain against an art, merely from its abuse; let us recollect that grammar has its foundation in the SCIENCE OF HUMAN NATURE. Philology, surely, cannot be uninteresting to the scholar, nor useless to the moral philosopher, when it is so deeply concerned in the knowledge of our own minds. But to return to the more particular consideration of the languages, the acquisition of which forms so large a part of English education. There are not a few who call themselves scholars, who appear willing enough that children should be early taught the elements of the languages, but whose precepts and

example discourage any attempts to gain their abstruser principles and hidden refinements. It seems not to be sufficiently considered, though it is certainly very obvious, that we can understand an author only in proportion as we understand the language in which he writes; that our idea of his meaning will be but inadequate, and our conceptions of his strength, or elegance, or felicity very imperfect, unless a much larger portion of time and study is employed than vulgar and superficial scholars think necessary. To be able to relate the facts of the Roman historians, Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus, into tolerable English, requires no great labour; but to become perfect master of all the delicate peculiarities of their style, to perceive the full force of their expression, and the artful construction of their sentences, requires a degree of application, as well as of critical acumen unknown to ordinary readers. These general remarks are also applicable to the Greek tongue, "which from its propriety and universa-" tility is made for all that is great and all that is beautiful, " in every subject and under every form of writing."* As it is unequalled in copiousness and in the number and variety of its authors, a perfect acquaintance with their works and with the principles and construction of the language is justly considered as the fruit of the noblest efforts of united genius and industry. Who does not reverence the learning of Bentley, of Porson, and of Parr?

Biblical criticism too must not be forgotten. Forming an important part of the study of theology, it demands the attention of all who pursue that science. It is unnecessary to state, that the minutest acquaintance with the Greek language is requisite for those who would make extensive researches in biblical criticism.

Such pursuits constitute the distinguishing character of English education. Formed by such discipline, and in-

* Hermes, Lib. 3, Cap. 5.

structed in such learning, can we wonder that those who have adorned the church and state of England have acquired a reputation for letters so lasting and unrivalled? Can we wonder at the eloquence and political wisdom of her statesmen, when we learn that they study the former in the schools of Demosthenes and Cicero, and draw the latter from the works of Xenophon and Thucydides? Not to mention the vast theological learning embodied in the Latin and Greek languages, have the English divines received no benefit from the studying the moralists of Greece and Rome? The revealed will of God is indeed the source from which all religious doctrines and precepts ought to be derived, and the standard to which they should be ultimately referred; but is it not useful to him, whose study in a great degree is the human character and the human mind, to survey those wonderful powers of intellect from which, while he discovers all the perfections of natural reason, he may also learn its deficiencies, and which, while they render more visible the darkness around them, seem to have been intended by providence to show to what astonishing height human intelligence, unaided by revelation, might ascend.

The grand object of a learned education is to inform and enlarge the mind with principles of moral truth, and with extensive views of men and human knowledge. To attain this end, something more is necessary than the study of a few authors of a particular era, either in ancient or modern literature. As it is the noblest employment of an intellectual being to know the various modes of thinking discoverable in the various styles of writing, as well as the different results of literary inquiries, so he will be far from an accomplished scholar, who is contented with knowing the writings of those authors only who flourished in one age, though the most glorious of Grecian or Roman learn-

ing. We should not call him well versed in Latin literature, who bounds his studies by the writers of the Augustan age.

This, then, is the praise of the literary institutions of England, and especially of the university of Oxford, that by them the literature of the various ages of antiquity is eminently cultivated and promoted, and that from these studies flow most of the advantages, which perfect a truly liberal education, and an extensive and accurate view of human knowledge.

> Still lingering on the banks
> Of Isis' silver stream, the Muse of Greece,
> As by Ilissus once, her awful truths
> Unfolds.

And it is the peculiar excellence of ancient literature that it not only affords the best precepts, but the best exercise, for the improvement and discipline of all our mental faculties. It is a very mistaken idea with some (I will not call them scholars) that the study of ancient learning rather cultivates taste than reason. But are not the works of Plato and Cicero, and indeed of most of the ancient philosophers, the productions of the sublimest reasoning powers? Have not the acutest men devoted their lives to the study of them? When the great Erasmus boasted that he had been occupied ten years in the study of Cicero, may we not believe that the faculty of reason which both possessed in so eminent a degree, enjoyed its fullest, its highest, and noblest exercise? The truth is, that the lofty efforts of reasoning powers excite the admiration of scholars no where more, than in the masterly writings of antiquity. But let us hear the philosophical author of Hermes. "When men, knowing noth-
"ing of that reasoning which is *universal*, come to attach
"themselves for years to a *single species*, a species wholly
"involved *in lines and numbers only*; they grow insensibly

" to believe these last as inseparable from all reasoning, as " the poor Indian thought every horseman to be inseparable " from his horse."* We must not wonder if men, whose views are so contracted and whose minds are so despicably little, exclude from the studies of ancient learning the active exercise of the reasoning powers, and make a classical education consist in school-boy prattle about the declension of nouns, or in childish eulogies on Virgil. We confess that in this country, the standard by which a classical scholar is estimated is low, disgracefully low; but we ought to admire that excellence and proud superiority in scholars of another country, which the system of education in this will not allow, at least will not encourage us to attain. The productions of many of those eminent men intitle them to our gratitude, and will cause them " to be had in everlasting remembrance;" but let it not be forgotten that their vast acquirements, and their never dying fame were the well-earned fruit of long and arduous labours; that they did not indulge in the indolent dissipation of mind, which submits not to steady and unremitted application, nor in the idle frivolity which marks the pursuits of some, who would be thought men of letters. The efforts of the classical student must be vigorous and continued, before he can receive intellectual pleasures worthy of him who is born to exercise intellectual faculties. The toils of every day will furnish new motives to explore the regions of mind. After all, much will have remained undone, and the close of life will not have witnessed the accomplishment of the task. A finished classical scholar is indeed rarely to be seen; a good one must have been the " pupil of a severe school, formed and chastised " by a persevering discipline;" and what industrious student will remit his exertions, when he learns from Parr the imperfections of Wakefield?

* Vide Preface to Hermes.

ENTHUSIASM.

ARISTUS is one of the best of men. His virtues indeed are not of a glaring and imposing kind: they are not such as gain their possessor the admiration of every superficial acquaintance, or extend his reputation for excellence beyond the circle of his friends. His are virtues of a higher order. It is true, they surprise less, but they charm infinitely more. Liberal in his sentiments, ardent and sincere in his attachments, he possesses that mild dignity of character, those amiable and refined feelings of the heart, that make us esteem him as a friend and revere him as a man. Aristus was in his youth what the world would call an enthusiast. Nearly sixty years have now rolled over his head. They have carried with them the vigour and fire of former days, but left the same generous and susceptible heart softened and improved. Petulance and moroseness are too often attendants of old age, and there are few indeed, whose best feelings are not impaired by its influence. One of these few however is Aristus. Time has not extinguished, but chastened the fire of youth: while it has whitened his locks, it has purified his heart. It has worn away the impatience and inconstancy of his younger days, and softened all those harsh feelings that sometimes govern him. It has established the empire of judgment over will, and that of prudence over passion. It has sobered his intemperate sallies of joy into an agreeable vivacity, and his fits of "moody madness" into "that pleasing melancholy," that renders the whole character more amiable and interesting.

About six years since, accident introduced me to the notice of this excellent man. From that time he has been my constant guide and monitor. Is my course of action dubious and perplexed? Aristus is sure to be consulted. Does passion or prejudice betray me into errour? Aristus is sure

to be informed of it. He is truly my spiritual confessor; and no penance can be inflicted so painful as his displeasure, and no reward bestowed so pleasing as his approbation.

It was after suffering severely from the effects of a too ardent and impetuous temper, that I applied to him the other evening for my usual restorative. I found him in that state of mind, in which he appears to me the most interesting. The events of the day had been melancholy, and had somewhat saddened him. He was alone, pensive, and musing. His countenance did not exhibit the moroseness of the disappointed man of the world, or the gloom of a desponding spirit, but the sadness of a susceptible and feeling mind. It was softened by piety, and flushed with the glow of benevolence. I told him of my disappointments, and inveighed bitterly against enthusiasm, as the source of them. The good man smiled at my earnestness, and defended his darling passion from my attacks.

"Scarcely any state of the mind," said he, "is so much "exposed to unmerited censure, as that against which you are "declaiming. From its very nature it is liable to a thousand "aspersions, and that too from those who possess the great- "est share of it, and admire it most. When undirected by "prudence, it is fruitful of errour and misfortune; and we "are too apt to be rash in accusing whatever pains us, with- "out considering the reasonableness of our displeasure; "without reflecting on the immediate cause of our unhap- "piness, or the peculiar circumstances that induced it. To "condemn whatever produces temporary uneasiness is un- "wise and illiberal. Before we form any judgment, we "should examine our own minds, and learn to attribute ef- "fects to their proper and adequate causes; and condemn "only when we have proof of guilt. I am myself fully of "opinion that the few ills, which, I acknowledge, are some- "times the fruits of enthusiasm, are infinitely overbalanced

" by the incalculable advantages and pleasures that result " from it. To form any idea of these advantages, we must " regard enthusiasm not merely as an emotion of the mind, " but as an effect produced by the united energies of a par- " ticular set of feelings. To point out all these feelings " would perhaps be no easy task : I may venture to men- " tion some, however, which are indispensable to the exist- " ence of enthusiasm, and form its principal and most strik- " ing characteristicks. True enthusiasm must be accompa- " nied by a lively and ardent genius, an acute sensibility, a " glowing fancy, a mind easily hurried into the extremes " of contending emotions. The enthusiast is entirely un- " shackled by the icy fetters of apathy or unfeeling selfish- " ness : he ceases to merit the name, when he ceases to be " a philanthropist. To his active soul every thing is fraught " with interest, for he shares in the wishes, the hopes, and " the feelings of others. From these few disconnected out- " lines of character, you may easily sketch in your own " mind a picture of the whole. There are many of the pe- " culiar traits, which you can better imagine than I can de- " scribe.

" It may perhaps at first appear, that these feelings, so " nicely attuned, and so exquisitely alive to every impulse, " would be a source of more misery than delight : especial- " ly since, according to the rigid calculation of the greater " part of mankind, our portion of the former, in this life, " far exceeds that of the latter. If this be your opinion, " believe me, it is an erring one. That this temper is more " susceptible of the pangs that so often torture our nearest " affections, must be allowed. It must be confessed that

" —the heart that is soonest awake to the flowers
" Is always the first to be touched with the thorns :"

" but this by no means disproves my assertion. Every one

" who has paid the slightest attention to the varying sensa-
" tions of the heart, must have perceived that our pleasures
" and pains are mutually the measures of each other : I do
" not mean those which owe their origin solely to external
" events, but those which seem independent of them, and
" arise merely from the natural state of the feelings. The
" spirits, like the ocean, have their regular ebbs and flows.
" The man of a cold and inanimate disposition finds little to
" interest him. If his pains are few, his pleasures are few
" likewise. He creeps along in the same dull round of mo-
" notonous existence :

" His life one long dead calm of fixed repose,
" No pulse that riots, and no blood that glows."

" Who can envy the man, who owes his freedom from pain
" only to his inability of tasting pleasure ? who lives indeed,
" but whose existence can scarcely be perceived, unless we
" apply to his deadened feelings the touchstone of self-inter-
" est or some sordid desire ; as we hold a mirror to the
" face of an apparently lifeless body, to determine whether
" the soul has taken its flight. Who would refuse to walk
" on the grassy plain, lest his tread should awaken the rage
" of some envenomed reptile ? Who would leave the rose
" on its stalk, lest his finger should be wounded by the
" thorns that surround it ? Total absence of pleasure is it-
" self a pain. Give me my share of the one, and I will
" cheerfully submit to my portion of the other. A pure
" heart shall enable me to enjoy gratefully, and suffer pa-
" tiently.

" Enthusiasm, as it sometimes elevates the spirits to an
" uncommon height, at others, proportionably depresses
" them : but this is far from being a serious evil. There
" is a luxury in grief and melancholy, when they originate
" from a refined and tender sensibility, that is entirely un-

" known to the colder and less susceptible mind. You who " have experienced it will readily comprehend my meaning ; " it is beyond the power of words to explain it to those who " have not. Beside this, there are several other conside- " rations that prove this very depression a source of pleas- " ure. Every one will allow, that a state of animated inte- " rest in persons and events is better than sullen apathy and " indifference. In man's present state, pleasure alone is not " sufficient to employ his whole mind, and keep all its pow- " ers in action. However varied, it will still prove inade- " quate to procure happiness : it will cloy and disgust him, " and thus lose the nature of pleasure. His mind requires " more powerful and vigorous stimulants. Like the bow, " it is injured by being always lax, as well as always bent " for action. Oftentimes, it refuses to be moved by any or- " dinary impulse, and demands the exertion of some vio- " lent effort. Hence, perhaps, we might account for some " of those mysterious emotions which are alike produced " by the extremes of joy and grief. Hence arises the plea- " sure that we experience in listening to the pathetick scenes " of a tragedy. We feel interested in the distresses of our " favourite characters, as if their misfortunes were real. Our " hearts ache for their sufferings, and we are moved even " to tears :—yet we are pleased ; we feel happy in indulg- " ing those very emotions that pain us.

" Believe me, the enthusiast possesses a thousand resour- " ces, that are not even dreamed of by the vulgar mind. The " universe is his property, and every object which it con- " tains administers something of profit and pleasure. I will " venture to assert, that all the noble and pure delights of " life exist but with enthusiasm. In all the trials of my life " it has supported, it has cheered, it has blessed me. When " overwhelmed with distress, it has administered consola- " tion ; when tortured by passion, it has soothed and reliev-

"ed me. Indeed, the enthusiast, though always hurried
"away by some master feeling, is still, however paradoxi-
"cal it may seem, more the master of his emotions than any
"other man. They are at his command; and he can call
"up at will, like some mighty magician, whatever passion
"he wishes to bear sway. He listens to the strains of mu-
"sick, and as the notes swell or fall, he glows with ardour,
"or melts into tenderness.—The enthusiast alone can en-
"joy the whole heaven of harmony.—"

Aristus paused: I did not reply, and he resumed *****

THE RUSSIANS.

THOSE, who are conversant with the history either of the literary or political world, need not be reminded of the power of prejudices, in deciding for individuals and parties their respective opinions. Not a century ago, the name of the GOTHS and all manner of barbarity, tyranny, and degradation of human nature, were synonimous. It was the triumph of Reason, in the last century, to thank the faithful allies of the falling majesty of Rome, who wasted the strength of their nation in the defence of liberty, as the soldiers of the emperours; and were finally extinguished in the power of the Lombards. In our time, France, and Britain, and Holland, to their respective calumniators and advocates, convey the idea of all that is elegant in literature, or profound in science; or of every thing that is frivolous, superficial, or dull. Now and then indeed there is a nation, which will unite the suffrages of more unanimous detraction: and the most eminent of these is the Russian. From the interested exertions of Charles XII, to the more unimportant struggles of modern political enemies, every generation has had its strenuous despisers of the country of Peter the

Great. True indeed it is, that the civilization of its northern and western frontiers has been recent, but we are too apt to think that because Peter is the first of the Czars, whose fame and exploits are popular, that before his ascension to the throne of Muscovy, its most polished inhabitants were Calmucks and Samoeids. Before the marshes of the Neva had been drained for the erection of St. Petersburg, Moscow was a luxurious capital, adorned by art, and splendid in its magnificence; and though the Tartars of Siberia might be rude, and the boors and vassals ignorant, the nobles and gentry received the ambassadours of Sweden, of Spain, and of France in a style that bespoke no contemptible refinement. Nor let this depreciate the merit of Peter the Great. It is still his fame to have built a glorious capital at the bottom of the Baltick, to have lined its streets with houses, to have crowded its quays with ships; and to have advanced the people, over whom he ruled, to an envious eminence in national importance. That the court of St. Petersburg is one of the most splendid in the world, and probably yields only to the Sultan's or the French monarch's, may suggest to the minds of most men, that the sovereign, who rules, and the nobles, who compose that court, at least excel in the elegancies of pompous refinement.*

* Yet it is of this court, that the scandalous stories, which are quoted from Dr. Clarke's travels into the Edinburgh Review, are told. We will not say to the unprejudiced, but to the commonly candid, it is sufficient only to read these tales to disbelieve them. How voracious did Dr. C. or his reviewers think the credulity of their readers was, when they told them that the Russians, from the emperour to the vilest slave, were so infected with vermin, that they seized the opportunity of holding their clothes over the stoves, when they visited the baths. *Incredulus odi.* By the way, it may be observed, that the Russian stoves extend from the floor nearly to the ceiling; and the space between the top of the room and that of a stove, will not admit this pretended purification.

It is charged too upon the Russians, that after the conquest of the Crimea, they "tore up, from the tombs, the bodies of the ancestors of the

But it is with the scientifick and literary character of the Russians, that we are more particularly interested. In the sciences, the new capital of the Russians has by no means been undistinguished. It was from Petersburg, that Euler published those discoveries or inventions in fluxions, that are the wonder and the guides of the English mathematicians to this day. In the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences, were published most of his calculations, and it is there too that the ablest commentaries upon them are to be found. It will perhaps be said that Euler was a foreigner. So is Sir Benjamin West; but do not the English claim and must not we resign the honour of patronizing his genius and rewarding its productions? In fact the Memoirs of the Academy of Sciences have recorded, in Latin, which would do honour to Cisalpine refinement, many of the most eminent discoveries of the last century. This we do not pretend to speak from our own investigations; but to whoever has consulted Dr. Hutton's excellent mathematical dictionary, our information is not novel. That the literature of the Russians should be respectable, the advancement of their science would naturally incline us to suppose. For though the causes which encourage science and literature

" Tartars, casting their reliques upon dunghills, and feeding swine out of " their coffins." Now, admitting this to be true, we would beg leave to compare it with the following extract from a book,* to which no one denies the merit of the most conscientious veracity. " Cardinal Wolsey died " here, (Leicester) and here Richard III was buried. *At the beginning* " *of the last century, his coffin was converted into a trough for horses to drink* " *out of, and was actually used for that purpose at a publick house in this* " *town.*" Now no person would pretend to quote this as a proof that the English disregarded the rights of sepulture, nor should it be argued with any greater reason, against an army of soldiers, provoked by the barbarity of a savage enemy, and elated by a bloody conquest. However it is not probable that this charge is true to any extent, for better hogs' troughs might be obtained by less trouble, than by digging up the mouldering remains of the coffins of the Tartar ancestry.

* *Silliman's travels.*

may, some of them, be of totally different natures, and of course one may flourish over the depression of the other, yet there is no example of a nation, respectable for its scientifick character, that has not made decent proficiency in literature. Accordingly we find that many of the Russian writers have attained high celebrity. Lomonossov is quoted as a grammarian by all the philologists of the old school, that knew Russian, and Sumorokov has been called the rival of Shakspeare. The banks of the Neva have been styled the rivals of Avon, and have heard strains of melody, that are repeated with rapture, from the Gulf of Finland to Behring's strait. It is a mistake, though a common one, that the Russian language is spoken only by the serfs. The French indeed is the language of the court. So it is of the courts of Denmark and of Vienna. The Russe is passionately loved and universally spoken by them erchants of the interiour, the citizens, and the farmers. In fact this mistake has originated in another, which regards the classes of the inhabitants of the Russian empire. It is an opinion, which has been entertained by those, who are content to borrow their opinions from prejudiced and partial representations, that the nobility and vassals compose the total population of the empire. Carr with all his faults has shown himself unprejudiced, and his accounts and Porter's corroborate the testimony of professor Maudru, " On parle, a la verite, " francois a la cour du monarque Russe; Mais la classe la " plus nombreuse, la classe commercante, a Petersbourg, ainsi " que dans tout le reste de 'l Empire, ne connoit et ne veut, " connoitre, que sa langue maternelle." This quotation establishes the fact that the Russian empire is inhabited as all other empires are, and that its inhabitants speak their own language. And they write it too. The Merope of Voltaire is indebted to a Latin translation of one of Sumorokov's plays, and their miscellanies and voyages, have pervaded

Europe. In fact we shall have reason to believe, if we are reasonably credulous, that the Russians, instead of being a set of savage aborigines, are like other folks: that, to use Dr. Clarke's valuable information, some of the nobles are rich, and some poor, that some of them are ignorant, and some intelligent. That the Russian nobility are remarkable for their attachment to the study of languages, and their success in the pursuit of that study, has been an obstinate fact in the way of those, whose business it has been to depreciate their character. It is called a vile dependence on foreign nations by some, and a mere parrot-like talent of imitation by others; when, had it been found on either side of the British channel, it would have been the subject of eulogy and envy. It is confessed that the occasion of the preceding remarks was the perusal of the Edinburgh review of Dr. Clarke's travels. To the readers of that review who have noticed the laudable suspicion, with which the tales of travellers have been received by it, it has been a matter of momentary wonder that such a meed of applause is awarded to Dr. Clarke's book, and that its most improbable relations are confirmed and quoted, though their indelicacy alone might have excluded them from modest pages. But it must be remembered that the Edinburgh reviewers have latterly had no scruples in sacrificing truth, and conscience, and taste on the foul altar of political prejudice. It must be remembered that the ministry, whom the reviewer vilifies, and the Russians, whose character he distorts, were once, and soon may be again, allies: that some of his political opponents have had the audacity to wish success to the arms of that power, which fought against the French, till it was vanquished; and which vindicated the cause of man and God, by its noble opposition to their common enemy.

ON THE REMAINS OF ANCIENT LITERATURE.

THE treasures of ancient learning, which have been so fortunate as to escape the ravages of time, excite in every generous mind the most lively sensations of pleasure. Every one must acknowledge the debt of gratitude, which he owes to those distinguished models of excellence.

The wanton depradations too of ignorance and bigotry will ever be remembered with regret. Genius and learning have wept at the rage of fanaticism, and have looked with indignation on the zeal of those misguided men, "who con-"spired to bury heathen wit in the same grave with heathen "superstition."

But many have immoderately grieved at the losses, which have been sustained in the republick of letters, as though there had been an universal shipwreck of the genius and the arts of antiquity. They have employed their industry in idle investigations, and have ransacked the ruins of buried cities, and with great labour have unfolded "the incinerat-"ed rolls of papyrus;" whichh ave neither repaid the labour by useful information, nor even satisfied a vain curiosity. One might suppose, from examining a catalogue of the preserved compositions of antiquity, that they were sufficient to satisfy the wishes of the learned, in almost every department. But many, with heartfelt sorrow and pious indignation, have lamented the fate of the one hundred and five comedies of Menander, the one hundred and twenty tragedies of Sophocles, and the fifty six of Euripides, when perhaps they have not read a single line of those that remain; nay, have not seen Homer, except in an English dress.

What good consequences might we expect, were the two thousand Greek plays, which are said to have once existed, now extant? It might satisfy the curiosity of the learn-

ed to examine and compare the writings of different authors; but how few would derive any advantage from such inquiries? We have still preserved, almost in a perfect state, numerous authors of the very first rank. We have valuable specimens in almost every department of literature, known to the ancients; and if we are inclined to sympathize with every man of taste in the irreparable loss of some exquisite pieces, we may reasonably console ourselves with those that remain. It is indeed to be regretted, that time should not have spared more of the elegant strains of Sappho, whose remains have been so universally and passionately admired. The fragment quoted by Doctor Warton is exceedingly beautiful.

Γλυκεια ματερ, ου τοι
Δυναμαι χρεκειν τον ιστον·
Ποθῳ δαμεισα παιδος,
Βραδιναν δι' Αφροδιταν.

"It represents," observes the Doctor, "the languor and "listlessness of a person deeply in love; we may suppose "the fair author looking up earnestly on her mother, "and casting down the web on which she was employed, "when she suddenly uttered this passionate exclamation."

But it is in the historick department, that the ravages of time have been with most reason lamented. The lost histories of Sallust and of Livy may probably be put against all the other lost productions of Greece and of Rome. We have the evidence of Quinctilian himself, that the remains of antiquity, which have been handed down to us, were in general considered as superiour to those which are lost. Of the authors, whom this critick ranks in the first class, most have reached us entire, and of others very valuable remains. We may indeed suppose that some, which have perished, were valuable productions; but many were undoubtedly the works of poetasters and ignorant pretenders to learning.

Many seem to have cherished the idea, that the productions of genius, like those of the vine, acquire their excellence from age; they therefore resolve to dislike every thing modern, and, with equal absurdity, to admire every thing ancient. These "laudatores temporis acti" rate at a much higher value an obscure treatise of an obscure author on musick, found among the ruins of Herculaneum, and rendered legible with immense difficulty, than the most excellent productions of modern genius. They load with their remarks and interpretations the precious rolls, where scarce a letter can be traced, and write long and learned dissertations upon what they are supposed to contain. Happy indeed were they, could they recover the lost Decades of Livy, or the Roman history of Sallust; but when the expectations of the learned have been so often disappointed, it is idle and vexatious to raise other expectations, which will probable never be gratified.

LIMON.

".....Pratensibus optima.....
" Natura est." HOR.

WOMAN.

Oh! who does know the bent of woman's phantasy.
SPENS.

FEMALE fickleness has always been a constant theme of ridicule and reproach. Poetry and prose in all their varieties, lofty and low, heroick and doggerel, have exhausted their shafts of reproof and satire against it. Great writers and small, vast geniuses and no geniuses have been equally forward to accuse the gentler sex of light, inconstant, fickle dispositions. "Fat folios" and meagre pamphlets have by

turns pointed their cannon and their popguns against what they call the weakness and levity of female minds. So much of this kind has been said, and so little to defend the fair from such an imputation, that it seems to be as much a maxim, that woman is, as Virgil describes her, " varium et mu- " tabile semper,"

" As variable as the shade,
" By the light, quivering aspen made,"

as if it were susceptible of mathematical demonstration. To this general and unqualified censure we can by no means assent. There are indeed traits that distinguish the male from the female character ; different habits of mind, that naturally arise from their different spheres of action. Courage and resolution seem to belong more peculiarly to the former ; delicacy, timidity, and sensibility to the latter. Yet all men are not blessed with the one, nor all women with the other : both often possess neither, and either is frequently endowed with both. We do not expect to find in woman

" the will to do, the soul to dare ;"

we look for virtues of a gentler kind : these are by no means incompatible with the most decided firmness ; indeed, we often find them, like the hues of the rainbow, delicately blended with each other. But if mildness luxuriate into weakness, and the refinements of sensibility into want of firmness, we should rather pity the failing as an excess of virtue, than violently censure it as a degree of vice. Whenever we undertake to inveigh against the fickleness of women, let us at least do them the justice to acknowledge those exquisite charms of mind, which gladden a life that would be intolerable withont them.

" O woman ! in our hours of ease,
" Uncertain, coy, and hard to please !"

If this be our exclamation, we ought at least in justice to add,

" When pain and anguish wring the brow,
" *A ministering angel, thou.*"

SPENSER AND SCOTT.

IS there not a coincidence of thought worth noticing in the following lines from Spenser's " Faerie Queene," and Walter Scott's " Lady of the Lake?" Both extracts represent a distressed female feelingly alluding to former prosperity. It is difficult to say whether the English or the Scottish bard is the more happy in the colouring of this exquisite touch of nature.

In the " Faerie Queene," Fidessa speaks thus:

" The wretched woman, whom unhappy howre
" Hath now made thrall to your commandement,
" Before that angry heavens list to lowre,
" And fortune false betraide me to thy power,
" Was, *(O what now availeth that I was!)*
" Borne the sole daughter of an emperour," &c.

Scott thus describes Ellen Douglas, when insulted in the guard-room:

" Her dark eye flashed—she paused—and sighed,
" *O what have I to do with pride!*
" Through scenes of sorrow, shame, and strife," &c.

It is pleasing to observe any similarity of thought or expression in the writings of those poets, whose labours have been so highly and justly appreciated.

GENEALOGY OF THE BOURBONS.

WE have pitied or smiled at Ferdinand the VII, as we witness his obstinate assumption of a throne, in defiance of a power, which we fear no earthly resistance can subdue, and which we know no principle of justice binds. And however earnestly we deprecate the ultimate success of Buonaparté, we fear that the royal sceptre of France will never revert to the heirs of its murdered king. The count of Provence must be content therefore to *claim* the seat of his ancestors, and rest satisfied in its disappointment that his claim is just. Yet we may forgive the pertinacity, with which he and his brother Ferdinand assert a hopeless crown, when we reflect that the house of the Bourbons is far the most ancient and illustrious of any, whose fame or annals have reached us. Besides the princes that have illustrated this family in modern ages, we may place on the list of its members, the Macedonian Alexander, and the Persian Arsacides. Two descendants of these great names, Artabanus and Chilienes, fled from the throne of Armenia, where, under the name of princes, they had been slaves to their Persian neighbours, to the protection and alliance of Leo I of Constantinople. Basil was the first of their descendants, who reached the throne of the Greek empire, which he transmitted to his son, Leo II. Constantine VII, Porphyrogenitus, succeeded to the sceptre, and after being expelled and restored, he bequeathed his titles and his power to his son, Romanus II. By his marriage with Theophano, Romanus had two sons and two daughters. The second of whom was married in the tenth century, to Wolodomir, grand duke and apostle of Russia. Her grand-daughter was the wife of Henry I of France, and thus the blood of Philip and Alexander, and perhaps of the Arsacides, yet flows in the veins of Ferdinand VII, and Louis XVIII.—While we mention this fact

of the Spanish and French kings, we would observe that the names of Louis and Clovis are originally the same. Clovis is a corruption of the barbarous Chlodovecus, the two first letters of which are merely the guttural aspirate, and the name was accordingly softened by the Latins, into Ludovicus, which we translate Louis.

THE MERCHANT OF VENICE.

IN this motley play of Shakspeare, which exhibits such variety of character, and is composed of such heterogeneous if not discordant materials, we are apt to think that its great author has exceeded the bounds of justice, in his delineation of the Jew. That he should form an ingenious plan to inveigle the merchant into the pledge of a pound of flesh, and resolutely insist upon the payment of the forfeiture may seem extravagant and unnatural. But besides the tradition upon which the play is founded, which though fabulous, may represent real manners, we have the authority of a code of civil law, to justify the simple fact of commuting a pecuniary debt, to a sacrifice of flesh and blood. The laws of the twelve tables, which the Roman delegates collated from the jurisprudence of Solon, made it lawful, in default of property, to divide the body of the insolvent debtor among his creditors. That this cruel satisfaction was ever taken, I do not believe; but the fact is still unaltered, that a code of laws, which Cicero called the sum and substance of all moral philosophy, repaid the uncancelled demand of a creditor with the arm, or the leg, or the hand, of his unfortunate debtor. This however is not said in defence of Shylock, whose inhuman disposition may be collected from other circumstances than the condition of his bond.